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**Japan's Early Missions to the West:  
A Comparison of the 1860 Man'en and 1872 Iwakura Embassies**

**by**

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**Japan's Early Missions to the West:**  
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## **Dedication**

To my family. To my parents for the example they are for me and my brothers and sisters for their special friendship. To my children, Kevin, Alan, Benjamin, Nelson, Jacob, Samuel, and Emily, for having to uproot their lives so often to support me in my military career. But most of all, to my wife, Colleen, for the sacrifices she has made in her life to support me. She makes me a better person and whatever good radiates from our family, stems from this wonderful woman...I love you.

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## **Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to analyze two nineteenth century missions from Japan to America, to determine if the members of the two legations differed in how they experienced the West. Were these individuals able to individualize, interpret, and express their experiences as they traveled? Did the political and social situation that existed in Japan at that time cause the two embassies to act in similar or distinctly different fashions? If different, was it due to differences in the aims of the respective missions or the nature of the men involved?

I submit that a combination of three factors shaped the outlook of the two missions. First, the skills of the primary envoys varied between the two missions. Second, the primary aim differed for both missions. Finally, revised government policy for controlling information from the West, at the time of these two missions, altered not only how each viewed the West, but also had a direct impact on the previous two factors.

At the time of the 1860 Man'en Mission, the three primary envoys, led by Shimmi Buzen-no-Kami Masaoki, were severely constrained by the feudal government they represented when they were assigned the primary task of ratifying the Treaty of Peace and Amity between Japan and America. Without prior experience in foreign diplomacy and having been instructed not to commit Japan to any additional obligations, they carried out their duties over the six-

month period in an obligatory fashion. Their journal entries were brief, often mechanical in style and provide little evidence that the envoys strayed from their primary assignment.<sup>1</sup> They did not reflect on the events they participated in and did not extend themselves to seek out advanced technology or to understand what drove the American economy, but instead returned with over four hundred books that were added to the Tokugawa government's Institute for Western Learning.<sup>2</sup> Their journals often sounded as if they were simply "signing in" for the benefit of government leaders who would read the accounts later. Influenced by anti-Western sentiment, which was causing contention within the warrior government, the three inexperienced representatives were anxious to return to Japan without becoming involved in any situation that might be scrutinized by their superiors and interpreted as disloyal or pro-Western.<sup>3</sup>

However, I suggest that in 12 short years, changes in society and government policy toward Western learning made it possible for the members of the embassy of 1872, which lasted 18 months and was led by Iwakura Tomomi, to

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<sup>1</sup> For journal accounts of the 1860 Mission, see the following: Yanagawa Masakiyo, The First Japanese Mission to America, trans. Junichi Fukuyama and Roderick H. Jackson, ed. M.G. Mori, reprinted. (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, Inc., 1973), 1-81.; and Muragaki Awaji-no-kami, The First Japanese Embassy to The United States of America, sent to Washington in 1860 as the first of the series of embassies specially sent abroad by the Tokugawa shogunate, trans. Shigehiko Miyoshi, comp. C. Shibama (Tokyo: The American-Japan Society, 1920), 1-76.

<sup>2</sup> John Peter Stern, The Japanese Interpretation of the "Law of Nations," 1854-1874, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), 45.

<sup>3</sup> Hirakawa Sukehiro, "Japan's Turn to the West," trans. Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi in Modern Japanese Thought, ed. Bob Tadashi Wakabayashi, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 57.



conduct both themselves and their mission in a significantly different manner. Their journal entries<sup>4</sup> sometimes convey little more than the date, location, and participants of a given event, much like those of their 1860 predecessors, but there were also occasions when members of the Iwakura Mission not only confronted and interpreted foreign culture, but also debated it openly amongst themselves and sought information from their foreign hosts to clarify various issues.

In this paper, I will provide evidence that the political environment of Japan in 1860 and the constraints placed on the members of the Man'en mission caused them to focus on only the one task: signing the Treaty of Peace and Amity. I will then focus on the Iwakura Mission and its expanded role, which allowed the members to look at things foreign in a different manner than their counterparts of 1860. To prove my argument, I will first provide the historical background and the composition of the respective mission. I will then examine some specific events that occurred during each legation's travels that can be gleaned from the English-language sources currently available, comparing the effects of their exposure to Western customs and institutions to how they interacted with their hosts on their assigned missions.

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<sup>4</sup> For journal accounts of the Iwakura Mission, see: Kido Takayoshi, The Diary of Kido Takayoshi: Volume II: 1871-1874, trans. Sidney Devere Brown and Akiko Hirota, (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1985), 111-357.

## Chapter I: The Man'en Mission

### History

The 1860 Mission to America was a result of Commodore Matthew C. Perry's Expedition to Japan, which sailed on the afternoon of July 8th 1853, into Yedo Bay. The Treaty of Peace and Amity<sup>5</sup> negotiated between the Tokugawa bakufu and Commodore Perry ultimately resulted in the reversal of the bakufu<sup>6</sup> policy of *sakoku*, or isolation from the West, implemented in 1639. The 1639 policy of seclusion prohibited all Japanese from leaving the country and all those living abroad from returning, while prohibiting all foreigners from entering the country. In this manner, the bakufu sought to establish domestic authority and control over foreign relations.<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, the bakufu attempted to maintain a monopoly of information from outside Japan by closely supervising private inquiry and discussion amongst

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<sup>5</sup> Unofficially, the Kanagawa Treaty was signed 31 March 1854. The treaty included: (1) opening the ports Shimoda and Hakodate to American ships; (2) providing coal and other provisions to American ships; (3) provide for the safety of shipwrecked sailors; and (4) opening an American consulate in Shimoda. Additionally, it included most-favored-nation status for both countries, extended to third-party nations regarding trade concessions.

<sup>6</sup> Bakufu means literally "tent government" and was the shogun's mechanism for governing. Shogun is short for *seii taishogun*, meaning "barbarian-subduing generalissimo" and was first established in 1192, bestowed on the head of the controlling warrior clan. The Tokugawa clan came to power in 1603 when the Emperor appointed Tokugawa Ieyasu shogun. The Tokugawa period was noted for peace among the daimyo, or feudal lords, and cultural development. To maintain control over the daimyo in the later years of the Tokugawa Period, the shogun formed a coalition of the most powerful daimyo, or Council of Elders.

<sup>7</sup> Kenneth B. Pyle, *The Making of Modern Japan*, 2nd ed. (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1996), 57-58.

its vassals.<sup>8</sup> During the period of isolation, Japan maintained ties with Holland, China, Korea, and the Ryukyu kingdom (modern day Okinawa), and was able to extract information about the world from these countries. After 1633, the Dutch East India Trading Company's superintendent, who was based in Nagasaki, made an annual pilgrimage to the bakufu headquarters in Edo to report on world affairs and technological advances. He also submitted a report to the Nagasaki representative of the Tokugawa bakufu after each port visit by a Dutch ship.<sup>9</sup> From 1764 the pilgrimages became biannual events and after 1790 occurred just every fourth year, the last being in 1850.<sup>10</sup> The bakufu also had access to information, by way of books imported annually from China, which included Chinese translations of Western books. In the 1790s the imported works also included Dutch books, and the government established a translation bureau in 1811.<sup>11</sup> Through these various sources of knowledge, the Tokugawa bakufu was aware of China's Opium war in 1840 and the possible threat of Western advances on Japan's own shores.<sup>12</sup>

In 1850 the bakufu established an institute for barbarian learning staffed by Dutch learning scholars and continued to amass closely guarded knowledge

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<sup>8</sup> Marius B. Jansen, Japan and Its World: Two Centuries of Change, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 41.

<sup>9</sup> Hirakawa, 34.

<sup>10</sup> Jansen, 31.

<sup>11</sup> Jansen, 37.

<sup>12</sup> Jansen, 44.

about the West.<sup>13</sup> By limiting dissemination of Western knowledge and technology, the bakufu placed the Japanese in a position far behind that of the technologically advanced West. This was clearly illustrated to the people of Japan by the superior American naval fleet Perry commanded and the gifts he presented to Japan, such as a model railroad and telegraph set.

The Treaty of Peace and Amity that Abe Masahiro signed with Perry in 1854 allowed for an American representative to be stationed at Shimoda. This paved the way for Townsend Harris to reside in Japan as the American Consul, and, subsequently, to the signing of the 1858 Treaty of Amity and Commerce.<sup>14</sup> It was the primary purpose of the first embassy in 1860 to ratify this treaty with the United States.<sup>15</sup> Yanagawa Masakiyo, Ambassador Shimmi's attendant, recorded that a second purpose of the mission was to observe "actual conditions in America."<sup>16</sup> Finally, a report from the American Philosophical Society on "The Great Embassy of 1860" suggested a third purpose of the mission: to establish the value of Japanese currency in relation to the American dollar.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Jansen, 38.

<sup>14</sup> The treaty, also known as the Harris Treaty, was a 14-article treaty. Most important to American and Japan relations, it provided for the opening of additional ports to American ships, trade without interference, the right for American citizens to live in the treaty ports, and extraterritorial rights for the Americans residing in Japan.

<sup>15</sup> Hirakawa, 54-55.

<sup>16</sup> Yanagawa, i.

<sup>17</sup> Muragaki, 286-287.

When analyzing how the Japanese interacted with foreigners from the time of Perry's visit until the Meiji Restoration, it is important to understand that during the entire period from 1853 to 1868, an anti-Western sentiment existed within the military government of Japan. Throughout the country, the popular sentiment was "revere the emperor and expel the barbarians." To some this meant taking immediate military actions to rid the country of Western people and influences, resulting in events where foreigners were killed, such as the "Richardson Incident."<sup>18</sup> A contrasting anti-Western position was to fully embrace all Western ideals and technology to allow Japan to progress and strengthen itself to the point that foreign powers would not attempt to violate Japan's sovereignty. In a December 1857 memorandum on the topic of foreign policy, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Chief of the Council of State, Hotta Masayoshi, who worked with Harris to develop a draft treaty for commerce, provided a policy statement and one example, between the two extremes of anti-Western sentiment:

I am therefore convinced that our policy should be...to copy the foreigners where they are at their best and so repair our own shortcomings, to foster

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<sup>18</sup> The "Richardson Incident" was one of many attacks on foreigners, living in Japan during the late 1850s and early 1860s, when anti-foreign sentiment was at its peak. Charles Richardson was a British merchant who was traveling with three other individuals, all of whom allegedly failed to pay proper homage as they rode past a group of Satsuma samurai vassals. Richardson was murdered and two others in his party were injured. The British subsequently demanded an apology and indemnity from the Tokugawa government and the Satsuma domain. The Tokugawa

our national strength and complete our armaments, and so gradually subject the foreigners to our influence until in the end...our hegemony is acknowledged throughout the globe.<sup>19</sup>

Hotta was unable to gain the Emperor's approval of the treaty he had drafted with Harris, due to a power struggle between the chief daimyo council and daimyo from the outer domains, which were in favor of restoring the emperor to power.<sup>20</sup> Hotta signed the treaty without imperial sanction, causing a greater division among the cabinet members. Consequently, Tokugawa Regent Ii Naosuke, drove Hotta to retire in 1858, and assumed control of the cabinet.<sup>21</sup>

To put down bakufu opposition, which had prevented Hotta from accomplishing his objectives, Ii eliminated supporters of the imperial court by having them jailed or executed. In the process, he also expelled the most able diplomats of the 1850s. Among these was Iwase Tadanari, who Masao Miyoshi describes as "an imaginative diplomat with a rare understanding of international affairs, anxious to learn about the West by personally observing it."<sup>22</sup> At a time

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government complied; however, Satsuma refused, resulting in a squadron of British ships destroying the domain's capital of Kagoshima on 15 August 1863.

<sup>19</sup> Masao Miyoshi, As We Saw Them: The First Embassy to The United States, New York: Kondansha America, Inc., 1994, 5.

<sup>20</sup> When Tokugawa Ieyasu gained military control over Japan, he established a hierarchy for the daimyo: *shinpan* or family daimyo were assigned land on the outskirts of bakufu land. *fudai* were the vassals affiliated with Ieyasu prior the unifying Battle of Sekigahara, and were given land on the outskirts of the *fudai*. Finally, there were those daimyo that became Tokugawa vassals after Sekigahara, *tozama* daimyo, who were given control of the outermost lands.

<sup>21</sup> Miyoshi, 18-20.

<sup>22</sup> Miyoshi, 19.

when Japan needed capable individuals to negotiate with the West, it had eliminated those with the knowledge and skills to enhance the country's position as an important, if not equal player in world affairs.

According to John Peter Stern, the bakufu originally selected a more able negotiator, Mizuno Chikugo-no-Kami Tadanori, as the chief envoy of the mission, only to replace him with Shimmi Buzen-no-Kami Masaoki.<sup>23</sup> At thirty-nine years of age, Shimmi had only a few months' experience as a diplomat. The Vice-Ambassador, Muragaki Awaji-no-Kami Norimasa, served as Commissioner of Foreign Affairs in his domain and at forty-seven had more experience in domestic diplomacy than Shimmi; however, neither was a significant player in the Tokugawa bakufu. Lieutenant James Johnston, who commanded the ship *Powhatan* that transported the embassy from Japan to America, described Shimmi as "not a man of brilliant intellect" and Muragaki as seemingly "attached to the embassy merely to make-weight."<sup>24</sup> The third principal member, Oguri Bungo-no-Kami Tadasu, at thirty-two was the youngest and assigned as a *metsuke*<sup>25</sup> or overseer. The Americans often referred to him as the spy. Masao Miyoshi believed him to be the most qualified of the three, as his position as an advisor to

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<sup>23</sup> Stern, 45.

<sup>24</sup> Muragaki, 107.

<sup>25</sup> The position of *Metsuke* is sometimes referred to as the eyes of the embassy, or a spy. The position seems to be used in much the same way as the political officer of the former Soviet Union, who was assigned to monitor and ensure compliance of state policy, in this case, to comply with *bakufu* instructions on conduct of the mission.

the ambassadors, and also inspector and supervisor of the entire mission, required "rigorous regulation and discipline," while Shimmi and Muragaki were "both uninformed and unimaginative."<sup>26</sup> The Vice-Ambassador and *metsuke*, like Shimmi, were selected over more qualified candidates who had experience in foreign affairs, due to turmoil and politics within the bakufu.<sup>27</sup> Miyoshi points out that there were also "treasury officers, foreign affairs officers, inspectors, secretaries, interpreters, physicians, and attendants and servants"<sup>28</sup> in the 77-member group. Nineteen of these were officers who were direct Tokugawa vassals, considered more loyal to the bakufu; however, daimyo retainers from a cross-section of domains filled the various lower-level positions.

The 1860 mission was the culmination of forced diplomacy on the part of the United States. The triumvirate of the 1860 mission conducted themselves as they did because they recognized the fragility of their positions in the Tokugawa government if they deviated from the guidance prescribed by the bakufu (See Appendix A). Even more indicative of how the mission would conduct themselves amongst the Americans was the envoys' policy of controlling the movement of the members of the mission. Prior to the mission's departure, the Council of State had ordered the embassy to "avoid everything but the barest of

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<sup>26</sup> Miyoshi, 22.

<sup>27</sup> Stern, 45.

<sup>28</sup> Miyoshi, 20-22.



essentials and to return home quickly."<sup>29</sup> The ambassadors determined, in conjunction with the *metsuke*, to issue passes or special permits to the lower-ranking men if they were to go anywhere other than their appointed lodgings. Even the officers required oral approval for the same privilege. A six o'clock evening curfew was also put into effect to prevent anyone from leaving his hotel after that time. With rare exception, the three envoys also submitted themselves to this rule. It was these circumstances that severely restricted the members of the 1860 embassy as they set off to exchange ratification of The Treaty of Amity and Commerce.

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<sup>29</sup> Miyoshi, 32.

## Reluctant Ambassadors

Foul weather en route to San Francisco dictated that the *Powhatan* divert to Honolulu in the Sandwich Islands for additional coal and provisions. The delegation was received graciously by King Kamehameha IV,<sup>30</sup> who desired to hold a reception in honor of the Japanese. The ambassadors determined that they should not interact with another nation's leader until their primary assignment was completed.<sup>31</sup> For that reason, the Japanese delegation declined the invitation, because their primary mission was to ratify a treaty with the United States. After staying in a hotel for three days, the delegation moved back into their shipboard lodgings to regain control of their accompanying attendants and servants, who were exploring the city of Honolulu. They hoped to avoid any incidents that might violate the foreign laws and customs. The move back to the ship was indicative of the fear the envoys had of being associated with improper actions by others for which they might be held accountable.<sup>32</sup>

Later, in the cities they visited, the hotels in which they stayed became their ships of refuge. For the chief envoys, they seemed to be a haven, as they would retreat early from receptions, balls, and other formal events to their rooms. The embassy was nearly half-way through their planned itinerary when Muragaki

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<sup>30</sup> Muragaki, 117.

<sup>31</sup> Muragaki, 14.

<sup>32</sup> Miyoshi, 27.

wrote on 18 May that it was "not our custom to attend any public function in the evening."<sup>33</sup> The envoys ventured out at night for the first time to attend an official event when they attended a State reception hosted by Secretary of State Lewis Cass. For those who desired to see the West first-hand, restriction to the hotels precluded the opportunity to meet the Americans and view their culture. An account by Shimmi's manservant, Tamamushi Sadayu Yasushige, represents the feelings and desire of some of the low-level retainers within the embassy:

While in the city, we are prohibited, by the strictest order of our own authorities, from taking even a step outside the hotel. Even when we are allowed to go out...we are accompanied by our officials. Most officers are wasting their days...purchasing things by two and threes...none are interested in discovering the institutions and conditions of America....Wishing to observe schools and colleges, I asked for permission several times, but...no officer was willing to accompany me there....I couldn't go to charity houses or orphanages, which should be the first on the itinerary if gathering information were the purpose.<sup>34</sup>

The leaders of the expedition strictly followed their instructions to concern themselves with only official duties relating to treaty ratification.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Muragaki, 42.

<sup>34</sup> Miyoshi, 35.

<sup>35</sup> Yanagawa, 25.

There is also evidence that the Japanese did not enjoy or feel comfortable interacting with other races on an equal level. They viewed most as inferior in cultural status. An example of this was a welcoming parade where many people converged on the carriages in which the embassy was riding. Yanagawa states that a group of children who approached them "was a lovely sight," yet when a Negro attempted to shake their hand, "no one would shake it."<sup>36</sup> This might be attributed to the embassy's knowledge of the discrimination between races in the United States as pointed out by Yanagawa when he related that there was an American-made distinction between Negroes and Whites, the white man having subjugated the Negro to slavery.<sup>37</sup> However in Honolulu, which was not yet a U.S. possession, Muragaki suggested that the natives were not intelligent,<sup>38</sup> while Yanagawa described the native people as having "a black and yellow skin...they resemble painted demons."<sup>39</sup> The Japanese, who were from an ethnically homogeneous society, were not used to dealing with outsiders. Additionally, members of the samurai class did not intermingle with lower class citizens on a familiar basis. Miyoshi describes an account in which Muragaki uses Japanese class distinction to explain his feelings of repugnance to interacting with the Americans. The event was a banquet in San Francisco that was apparently

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<sup>36</sup> Yanagawa, 46-47.

<sup>37</sup> Yanagawa, 56.

<sup>38</sup> Muragaki, 9.

<sup>39</sup> Yanagawa, 10.

expunged from the English translation of Muragaki's journal. In it, Muragaki equates associating with Americans at the ball to eating in an Edo restaurant with boozing laborers.<sup>40</sup> On another occasion, the envoys departed early from a banquet in their honor after having met a minimal obligation of attendance, after which Muragaki recorded, "We are sorry to say, however, that it was far from being our taste."<sup>41</sup> The ambassadors were surprised on several occasions to learn that there seemed to be little distinction at formal events amongst the people, even to the extent that the President wore the same type of clothing as, and intermingled with, regular people.<sup>42</sup>

The discomfort of interacting with the foreigners, including the Americans, whom they were forced to negotiate with because of their military superiority, extended even to America's political elites. On May 17, 1860, the delegates concluded their official call on President Buchanan. The Japanese had previously determined not to call on officials from other countries, to eliminate possible complications to the mission. Japanese protocol required they should meet with President Buchanan first to show respect to America's leader, and this requirement enabled the embassy to initially decline any attempts by other foreign nations to schedule visits with the Japanese legation. After they paid their

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<sup>40</sup> Miyoshi, 56.

<sup>41</sup> Muragaki, 71.

<sup>42</sup> Muragaki, 38-39.

respects to the American President, the escort officer, Captain Dupont, recommended to the envoys to call on the other countries' foreign ministers who were in Washington, as this was the official custom. This should not have posed a problem, but Muragaki's account suggests they conducted the visits purely to avoid violating social law, and they paid calls only to the countries with which Japan had treaties. The procedure they followed was to have their driver deliver calling cards, except with Holland and England's legations, which they visited personally.<sup>43</sup> Holland was the Western country with the longest continuous relationship with Japan, while the British were still deemed to have one of the most powerful navies in the world. The 1860 embassy appears to have conducted the visits only because there was no longer a protocol that prevented them from doing so. The envoys reluctantly paid their respects to the foreign ministers, but personally met only the ministers whose countries could have the greatest influence on Japan.

Another example of discomfort towards what was foreign and embracing something resembling Japanese culture was played out when two or three members of the delegation attended two plays, one in which females assumed female roles, and the other – in a Chinese theater – in which male actors played all the roles. Although both plays were in foreign languages, they enjoyed the

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<sup>43</sup> Muragaki, 46.

Chinese play with all male actors more "because it was like a Japanese play."<sup>44</sup> It is difficult to determine the actual feelings the Japanese had towards things Western by this relatively harmless comparison. Due to their lack of any command of the English language, it is not surprising that they gravitated toward anything that was familiar to their culture. When joined with the other examples, it does demonstrate that the Japanese were reluctant ambassadors and would rather have interacted with foreigners on their own terms in their own country.

A separate objective of the mission was to observe actual conditions in America. The Japanese were very diligent in executing their duties in this area. Included in the delegation were artists who at every stop continuously sketched in meticulous detail events, machinery, and even the inside plumbing of the hotel rooms.<sup>45</sup> The embassy always attracted a crowd, with the sketch artists attracting much interest. The Japanese were continually amazed at the crowds and excitement they generated. They eventually understood that they were as interesting to the Americans as any of the American technological advances were to them. In this respect, there was also a commercial aspect that contributed to the availability of new technology for the embassy to view. Manufacturers were eager to gain exposure of their goods and sought time with the delegation by showering gifts on and making tours available to the embassy in hopes of future

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<sup>44</sup> Yanagawa, 28.

<sup>45</sup> Muragaki, 179-181.

commercial ventures in Japan. Muragaki notes, "In time, the envoys and lesser officers discerned that they were being exploited; subsequently, many invitations were declined."<sup>46</sup> Having been instructed to avoid obligating Japan in any way, the delegates severed relations with the manufacturers after learning their ulterior motives conflicted with the bakufu's instructions.

Although they were reluctant to deal with American commercial interests, much of what they saw intrigued the members of the embassy. In Honolulu, they saw steam-powered equipment dredging the harbor. The high-speed trains with their steam engines allowed Americans to travel ten times farther than the typical Japanese in the same amount of time.<sup>47</sup> Yanagawa was in awe of the train in Panama and wanted "the reader to please consider this great speed!"<sup>48</sup> Muragaki was even more impressed with the Washington Navy Yard's steam-powered equipment, which forged all manner of metals into weapons, ammunition, and equipment. He wrote, "I was filled with envy and with an ardent desire to see works such as this, established in my own country."<sup>49</sup> Muragaki also understood that Japan should adopt the new technology, when, after viewing the moon at an observatory, he expressed the "wish that some of our young men could come over and see all these instructive investigations into the various phenomena of heaven

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<sup>46</sup> Muragaki, 300.

<sup>47</sup> Muragaki, 47.

<sup>48</sup> Yanagawa, 34

<sup>49</sup> Muragaki, 53.



and earth."<sup>50</sup> Yanagawa and Muragaki were both acutely aware of, and interested in, the products of the West's superior technology, yet they made no serious attempts to expand their knowledge of the Western advances through direct inquiry.

Fukuzawa Yukichi, although not an official member of the 77-man legation, was an exception to how the members of the 1860 mission conducted themselves. He had a great desire to learn about the West and so requested to accompany the Captain of the *Kanrin Maru*, Kimura settsu-no-kami, as his personal servant. Having taught himself some English and as a member of the *Kanrin Maru*'s crew and the Captain's personal retainer, Fukuzawa had more exposure to San Francisco than the members of the main embassy.<sup>51</sup> Also, as a personal retainer of the Captain, Fukuzawa would have accompanied him on formal visits and other official events, which allowed him greater access to functions he otherwise would not have attended.<sup>52</sup> Fukuzawa had studied at the Dutch learning school in Osaka prior to his 1860 visit to America so that he had heard about and, in many cases, at least seen pictures of the technology that so mesmerized the envoys who were viewing it for the first time. However, he was

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<sup>50</sup> Muragaki, 53.

<sup>51</sup> The *Kanrin Maru*'s crew waited four months for repairs to be completed to their ship before returning to Japan.

<sup>52</sup> Wayne H. Oxford, *The Speeches of Fukuzawa: A Translation and Critical Study*, trans. ast. Eiichi Kiyooka (Chiyoda-ku, TokyoHokuseido Press,1973), 12-15.

more interested in the "social practices and institutions, such as relations between the sexes, family customs, life insurance, the postal and banking systems, hospitals, and lunatic asylums."<sup>53</sup> Fukuzawa was meticulous in recording what interested him in his journal. He acknowledged that when he visited the social institutions, he wanted to know the inner workings, how they were managed, why this was so, and the effect of the institution on society.

In contrast to Fukuzawa's progressive attitude, the official members of the embassy took interest in less spectacular but practical items such as ink pens, watches, and gas lamps, as well as the luxury of their surroundings, expressing astonishment over the extravagance of their rooms.<sup>54</sup> In San Francisco, there was a clock in each of the rooms, and the rooms were "so fine...our eyes nearly popped out in amazement," while in Philadelphia, the rooms were "beyond description."<sup>55</sup> The descriptions of the rooms they stayed in throughout the trip would inevitably include mention of the mirror. The sheer size and elaborate ornamental design of both the rooms and the mirrors were mentioned, both of which were no doubt of a different grandeur than what they were accustomed to. The details of such experiences were combined with a wide variety of other resources accumulated by the mission, such as their own artists' sketches and a

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<sup>53</sup> Pyle, 82.

<sup>54</sup> Muragaki, 67-68.

<sup>55</sup> Yanagawa, 23.

wide selection of books, which they purchased to take back to Japan for research and study by the Dutch Learning Scholars. Although they did not always fully understand what they were observing, the assignment to acquire knowledge of the situation in the West was one that was very adequately addressed.<sup>56</sup> Furthermore, the large number of books, over 400, which they carried back to Japan, were the medium for obtaining knowledge about the West in 1860.

The final assignment for the mission was establishing an exchange rate for the two nations' currencies. Western exploitation of Japan's exchange rate of gold for silver had created a large movement of Japanese gold to foreign countries. To solve this problem, Japan needed to establish a fair exchange rate. This was facilitated by assaying samples of a *koban*, or Japanese gold coin, and a United States gold dollar on June 13, 1860, at the Philadelphia Mint, thereafter setting a fair standard on the world market for Japanese currency.<sup>57</sup>

With their mission complete, the embassy had one last stop in New York, after which they desired a speedy return to Japan and urged Secretary Cass to ensure there be no stops in foreign ports except for acquiring coal and provisions. Cass assured the envoys that there would be only the minimum essential stops on the return trip. This accomplished, the mission returned to Japan, arriving in Yedo on September 28, 1860.

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<sup>56</sup> Muragaki, 151.

<sup>57</sup> Muragaki, 288-291.

## **Chapter II: The Iwakura Mission**

### **History**

The Iwakura Mission expended considerable amounts of time and energy to negotiate a new treaty while in the United States. In light of their efforts, it would be very easy to classify it as a treaty mission, albeit one that failed in its attempt at revision. However, the Meiji government dispatched the members of the 1872 legation for far broader purposes. The first was the desire by the new Meiji leadership to be officially recognized by the Western powers as a legitimate and credible government. The second was to gather information about Western technology and social institutions that could be used to promote modernization and industrialization. The final purpose of the mission was to investigate the possibility of initiating discussions for revision of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce.

The Meiji government needed to establish itself as the legitimate political institution for Japan, and the Iwakura Mission was one of the first attempts to represent the new government abroad. The uprising that initiated the Meiji Restoration eliminated Japan's last feudal government, which had been responsible for over two hundred years of *sakoku*, or controlling the flow of information from the West. It was important that the leaders of the Western nations accept the new Restoration leaders as Japan's legitimate government

representatives, replacing those of the Tokugawa bakufu who had previously interacted with the Western diplomats.

The head of the bakufu or warrior government's Council of Regents signed the original treaty between Japan and the United States. However, the treaty was not based on a consensus among the leading government factions. The main opposing views were to expel the barbarians and keep Japan closed to the West or to fully embrace Western culture and technology on the assumption that the West's superior technology and weaponry demonstrated a more enlightened society. In between these extremes, some sought to maintain relations with the West only long enough to import the technology necessary to develop a military force to defeat the Western powers, while others desired to embrace technology while shielding Japanese society from Western influence.

In the shadow of the contradictory opinions of the leaders of the Restoration, and anti-Western sentiment towards the unequal treaties, the new Meiji Government was determined to adhere to all of the existing treaties, despite their disadvantages for Japan. Acknowledging the existing treaties enabled Japan's new leaders to maintain channels of communication with the West, established when the treaties were negotiated. This also prevented any of the Western nations from using their military strength to once again force their will

on Japan as Perry had done in 1853.<sup>58</sup> Recognition as Japan's representatives by the Western powers would also help legitimize the new government and its leaders, and enhance their ability to create domestic programs and further international relations.

Japan's leadership sought information about the West to strengthen its own standing as a civilized nation. In November 1871, the Emperor Mutsuhito, later known as Meiji, addressed the nobles who would soon be going out as Japan's representatives on the Iwakura Mission (See Appendix B). Many of these young nobles had been low-level officials in the outer domains, who had united to oust the governing Tokugawa Shogunate and subsequently emerged to hold key positions in the new Meiji Government. The Emperor exhorted the new leaders and other delegates that were departing on the Iwakura Mission with the following statement:

The most powerful and enlightened nations of the world...have made diligent effort to cultivate their minds, and sought to develop their country....If we would profit by the useful arts and sciences and conditions of society prevailing among more enlightened nations, we must either study these at home as best we can, or send abroad an expedition of practical observers, to foreign lands, competent to acquire for us things

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<sup>58</sup> W. G. Beasley, "The Iwakura Mission in Britain, 1872," *History Today* 31 (1981):29.

our people lack, which are best calculated to benefit this nation. Travel in foreign countries...will increase your store of useful knowledge...<sup>59</sup>

It is clear that the Emperor desired to work in concert with the goals of the new Meiji government to identify what among the West would most benefit Japan, not just through the study of books, but through personal contact, evaluation and adaptation. In so doing, Japan could bypass the long, drawn-out processes of reform and development. In sharp contrast to the instructions for the 1860 mission, there was no requirement to avoid all that was not essential or to return quickly. On the contrary, Iwakura clearly understood that the intent of the mission was "to discover the great principles which are to be our guide in the future."<sup>60</sup> To accomplish this objective, the members of the 1872 mission would have to seek out, analyze, and compare the various institutions across America and the world to determine what would be best for Japan. They were given the freedom and means to do this.

The importance of what was about to happen cannot be overstated, as many of the most influential leaders of the Restoration were about to go abroad for nearly twenty months, at a time when their power and influence would have been welcomed as a stabilizing domestic force. They included Prince

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<sup>59</sup> Arinori Mori, The Japanese in America, ed. Charles Lanman (New York: University Publishing Company, 1872), 6-7.

<sup>60</sup> Pyle, 85.

Iwakura Tomomi, who at forty-seven was appointed Ambassador Extraordinary. He had never left Japan and spoke no English. Iwakura had opposed the bakufu and was a key figure in the new government. As the Junior Prime Minister, he was the number-three man in the Meiji government and was the principal working executive. There were also four Vice-Ambassadors: Kido (Koen) Takayoshi (thirty-nine), was a member of the Privy Council; Okubo Toshimichi (forty-three), was the Minister of Finance; Ito Hirobumi (thirty-two), was the Acting Minister of Public Works; and Yamaguchi Masuka (thirty-four), the Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs.<sup>61</sup> The mission included in total forty-nine officers from the various ministries, "five young ladies and 53 young gentlemen and servants."<sup>62</sup> Of the latter group, the majority were *ryuugakusei*,<sup>63</sup> or students who had studied abroad, mastering the language of their host country. With their newly acquired expertise in foreign languages, the Japanese were able to provide their own translators in each country they visited. By acquiring their language skills in the host country, the *ryuugakusei* also learned its basic geography and gained insight into its culture and history.

The final task of the 1872 Iwakura Mission was to look into the possibility of modifying the Treaty of Amity and Commerce. The earliest date that either

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<sup>61</sup> Mori, 8.

<sup>62</sup> Mori, 8.

<sup>63</sup> By 1872, approximately 300 *ryuugakusei*, or students studying in foreign countries, had been sent overseas at the expense of the Meiji government. Brown, 191.



side could ask for revision was July 1, 1872.<sup>64</sup> The Chargé d' Affaires to Washington, Mori Arinori, had spent considerable time working with American Secretary of State Hamilton Fish and felt he had mastered the diplomatic process necessary to revise the 1860 treaty. This would increase his standing in the new government and the diplomatic community in Washington. Mori, along with Ito Hirobumi, convinced the leaders of the Iwakura Mission that they would be able to renegotiate a new treaty that was more favorable for Japan while they were in the United States, rather than just investigate the possibility of doing so. Two of the leading members of the embassy, Okubo Toshimichi and Ito, even returned to Japan in order to gain plenipotence to renegotiate the treaty. After the embassy failed to revise the treaty, Kido Takayoshi indicated in several passages his embarrassment and disgust at being misled by the overly optimistic Mori. Kido also believed that Mori was seeking political gain and notoriety through this venture and regretted the amount of time spent on the futile attempt at diplomacy.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Stern, 82.

<sup>65</sup> Kido, 142-43, 147, 149-50, 154, 172, 180.

## Seeking Enlightenment

In this section, I will analyze events from the Iwakura Mission of 1872-73, emphasizing those that highlight the differences from the 1860 mission. I do this not to represent one as better or worse than the other, but rather to explain how a change in the political environment greatly altered the conduct of the second mission. The primary focus of the Iwakura Mission was to gain legitimacy for the new government, to study the Western "social and economic systems," and to address revision of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce.<sup>66</sup>

The day after arriving in San Francisco, the embassy welcomed "consuls of twenty-six foreign countries."<sup>67</sup> Chief Ambassador Iwakura outlined the purpose of the mission to "establish peaceful relations more firmly, and to see how greater privileges may be granted...of a righteous government and a free people."<sup>68</sup> Since the Treaty of Amity and Friendship had been in place between Japan and America since the 1850s, the intent was to ensure these relations continued between America and the new Meiji government. Emphasizing the "righteous government and free people,"<sup>69</sup> Iwakura was assuring the leaders and citizens from around the world that a legitimate, capable government was at the

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<sup>66</sup> Ian Nish, ed., The Iwakura Mission in America and Europe: A New Assessment, Meiji Japan Series: 6 (Richmond, Surrey [U.K.]: Japan Library, 1998), 11-12.

<sup>67</sup> Kido, 115.

<sup>68</sup> Mori, 11.

<sup>69</sup> Mori, 11.

helm in Japan, representing a people not so different from the freedom-loving Americans.

Prince Iwakura was very aware of the importance of projecting the image of the new government as a stable entity representing Japan when he explained to the foreign representatives why they should recognize the new government. A savvy delegation also demonstrated a changed attitude toward the West, along with a better understanding of diplomatic procedure. Kido's journal entry for that day noted that the envoys actively participated in the visit with the Chief Consuls. Unlike the 1860 delegation that had the retainers deliver calling cards to all but the most important Foreign Ministers, the envoys of the Iwakura Mission regarded the representatives as important enough not to delegate to the lesser officers.

The mission was also prepared to interact with the leaders of government and industry throughout the world, demonstrating their confidence in doing so by breaking up the large legation and sending some off to Europe just four days after arriving in America.<sup>70</sup> The skills of the *ryuugakusei* in many foreign languages enabled them to communicate without having to translate all conversations into Dutch as the mediating language. In planning the logistics of the mission, the

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<sup>70</sup> Kido, 116.

government dispatched representatives who knew the customs, history, and the geography of each country.

In contrast to the 1860 mission, the members of the Iwakura mission did not sequester themselves inside hotel rooms and seal off the outside world. Meetings amongst themselves and with foreign representatives occurred on several occasions, and location did not seem to be an issue. Some of these meetings occurred at formal meeting halls, in the hotel rooms of the Japanese, or even the foreign host's living quarters, and lasted as late as three o'clock in the morning.<sup>71</sup> The ambassadors often held these meetings to reflect on the day's events or discuss what the delegates had viewed at a particular institution and its applicability to Japan.<sup>72</sup> Further evidence of the preparation for advanced diplomacy was their willingness to stay at different hotels in the cities they visited.<sup>73</sup> Additionally, they established an executive office in Washington D.C. to work from while visiting the capital.<sup>74</sup> All of these examples point to a Japan that had matured diplomatically in dealing with the West.

Kido Takayoshi's journal account of March 1, 1872 suggested another way Japan had changed:

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<sup>71</sup> Kido, 5.

<sup>72</sup> Kido, 118, 144-145.

<sup>73</sup> Kido, 181.

<sup>74</sup> Kido, 163.

In the year of the Restoration, 1868...I proposed to the Imperial Government that...governmental officials...should pledge their support for the Five Article Charter Oath, to establish the course for the nation. Now we must develop a more definite fundamental law; so during this trip I want to give the highest priority to an inquiry into the basic laws and structure of government of each country we visit.<sup>75</sup>

Kido focused on looking at each of the 15 nations he visited in search of what was best for Japan. In San Francisco, he began what he had set out to do when he did not just visit, but "inspected" three different area elementary schools: a boys' school, one for girls, and a co-educational school. After viewing the schools, he reflected with Japan's Minister of Education on the difficult but imperative nature of improving education as a top priority if Japan was to flourish as a nation.<sup>76</sup>

Kido visited a reformatory for boys where technical and academic classes were each taught for five hours a day. After the visit, he noted that Japan "must envy such institutions,"<sup>77</sup> making it clear that some form of this type of school would be very useful in Japan. That evening he went for a walk with Yamada, a Brigadier-General in the imperial army, and Nagayo, from the education department, to discuss what he viewed that day with the representatives of Japan's

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<sup>75</sup> Kido, 133-134.

<sup>76</sup> Kido, 118.

<sup>77</sup> Kido, 141.

institutions that would benefit from and participate in educating young men. On a separate occasion, Kido inspected a sanitarium and asked for "the rules and regulations." It was clean and well run, and Kido desired "to have such a [*sic*] institution in Japan."<sup>78</sup> After visiting a printing office, Kido observed that books were inexpensive compared to other American goods.<sup>79</sup> He felt that Japan must pay attention to the fact that books should be available at an affordable price, which would intellectually stimulate the Japanese just as books had stimulated the Americans.

The embassy also took notice of technology during their tour. There were many visits to factories and foundries in which they took note of the equipment, much in the same manner as the earlier mission, but of greater interest was the sheer size of the organizations and efficient manner in which they were operated. They were amazed, for instance, by a cotton mill that employed 1800 people and had a nine-percent profit rate over forty years of production. Despite being impressed with such numbers, Kido admired most the library established in the factory where the workers could rent books at a very low cost.<sup>80</sup>

Education was not solely a crusade for Kido; it was also important to others on the mission. Chargé d' Affaires Mori reemphasized the importance of

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<sup>78</sup> Kido, 126.

<sup>79</sup> Kido, 145.

<sup>80</sup> Kido, 193.

education and the attitude of the mission as a whole when he stated, "No civilization...can be attained, so long as we remain beneath our proper degree of manhood....An apple is not seen as an apple...until ripe...a human is not a...human until educated."<sup>81</sup> Iwakura himself stated, "We came for enlightenment and we gladly find it here."<sup>82</sup> To find it, the members of this mission diligently searched. As the American portion of the visit was nearing an end, the primary ambassadors had an opportunity to take a break before leaving for Europe. Instead, they took advantage of another opportunity to observe American institutions by visiting an orphanage.

For the third objective of the mission, addressing the possibility of treaty revision, the principal members of the mission were force-fed lessons on diplomacy while in America. It was in the area of international law that the envoys learned one of their most important lessons. Although they gained valuable experience interacting with their counterparts in fifteen different nations, the attempt to renegotiate the Treaty of Amity and Commerce while in the United States was their first attempt at high-level diplomacy. Ito Hirobumi had some experience in foreign affairs, having spent two years in England in the early 1860s and again from 1870-71 in America while studying Western treasury systems. Yamaguchi Masuka was somewhat knowledgeable of international law, but the

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<sup>81</sup> Nish, 28.

<sup>82</sup> Nish, 13.

embassy was not prepared to negotiate on equal footing with the more experienced diplomats of the West.

Working in his capacity as the chief executive of the new Meiji government in 1868, Junior Prime Minister Iwakura urged the peaceful continuation of treaty diplomacy with the Western nations. Another member of the embassy, Okubo Toshimichi, assisted in composing the document that laid out the intent of the new government for dealing with the West and placated those who desired to immediately take up arms to drive the foreigners out. In it, Okubo writes, "In the treaties signed by the bakufu to date, there are abuses and inequities....We shall take steps to reform our diplomatic posture through the universal law of nations" (udai no kouhou).<sup>83</sup>

Ito worked to learn the logic and etiquette of the Law of Nations<sup>84</sup> while he was studying treasury systems in America and became the defender of its merits throughout the Iwakura Mission. Mori Arinori, the Chargé d' Affaires to the United States and a protégé of Ito, was even more ardent in his belief in the Law of Nations as an equitable and effective diplomatic tool. It was Mori who felt he understood, through his dealings with American Secretary of State

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<sup>83</sup> 8 February 1868 proclamation, *Dai Nihon Gaiko Bunsho* I, part 1,228, quoted in Stern, 81.

<sup>84</sup> The Law of Nations was explained by Stern as "...both the principles that Western diplomats felt guided the intercourse between the Occident and Oriental countries, and the principles that the Japanese perceived the West to follow in dealing with the East." The Law of Nations incorporated International Law, which was the "rules and structures found in Western books on diplomacy." (Stern, x.)



Hamilton Fish, that the Americans were willing to immediately revise the Treaty of Amity and Commerce rather than wait until the original date of July 1872, as set forth in the 1858 treaty.

Once the mission set its sights on revision, Fish insisted on Western protocol, which the Japanese legation did not fully understand. The Japanese delegation was not prepared to negotiate and did not possess plenipotentiary authority from their government to do so. Subsequently, Ito and Okubo returned to Japan and obtained imperial sanction to represent Japan in treaty revision.<sup>85</sup>

The Japanese ambassadors were not aware of the legality of revising a treaty with one country, independent of all treaty nations, when most-favored-nation status was involved. In his capacity as Secretary of State, Fish was simply working for American interests; maintaining a treaty favorable to the United States with a newly industrializing Asian nation and its emerging market, served that purpose. However, any concessions Japan may have made in negotiations with the United States would have applied equally to the other treaty nations, which maintained most-favored-nation status, and put Japan at a further disadvantage. Therefore, Fish's attempt to revise the treaty would have placed Japan at a greater disadvantage with the other treaty countries. The German

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<sup>85</sup> Kido, 141.

Foreign Minister to Japan, Maximilian Von Brandt, informed Kido of this while in the United States.<sup>86</sup>

The journal of Kido is awash with accounts of his struggle with Mori over the issue of treaty revision. There were several accounts of meetings to discuss the issue, and Kido became painfully aware of the possible damage for Japan if the political agenda of Ito, and to a greater extent Mori, was pushed through. Kido believed Ito and Mori were seeking to gain notoriety for revising the treaty to advance their status in Japan's new government, even if it resulted in extending the unequal treaties that were negatively impacting Japan's attempt to industrialize and achieve economic parity with the West.<sup>87</sup>

In addition to Germany's Foreign Minister pointing out his country's ability to invoke the most-favored-nation clause, England's minister to Japan, Sir Harry Parks, also declared the British would not consider giving up extraterritoriality in Japan, nor would they allow Japan to govern their foreign trade without the unequal tariffs.<sup>88</sup> Here again, as the Western nations demonstrated little regard for Japan's sovereignty, it became clear to Iwakura that the Law of Nations only protected the weak countries when the strong countries wanted it to do so. The Iwakura Mission was the litmus test for those who argued

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<sup>86</sup> Kido, 180.

<sup>87</sup> Kido, 142-43, 147, 149-50, 154, 172, 180.

<sup>88</sup> Stern, 85-87.

that the Law of Nations would protect Japan's interests by international law or at least through the etiquette of Western diplomacy. Others believed it would destroy Japan by functioning as a one-sided tool of strong nations to control weaker ones. In 1869, when the British postponed work on treaty revision, Iwakura became a strong advocate of the latter view.

The process of working through the issues on treaty revision was not an easy one for individuals who had little to no experience in such complex procedures. The controversy that developed between members of the embassy, did so only because Mori and Ito formed a different opinion from the other envoys on how to negotiate with the Americans on treaty revision. The many discussions on the feasibility of treaty revision indicated that personal interpretation by members of the mission did take place. Although Kido's journal entries do not provide a complete text of the discussions, it is easy to surmise from the level of anguish, frustration, and anger he expressed that these were hotly contested debates. The discord could not have occurred without differing opinions on the validity of the Law of Nations and different perceptions on previous diplomacy in Japan and abroad. There is no indication in the records reviewed for this essay of anything like this during the 1860 mission.

The mission also changed the attitude of at least one of its members. The Minister of Finance, Okubo Toshimichi, embarked on the mission with a

tendency to oppose those who sought to Westernize Japan. However, after observing the Western institutions, he changed his mind. He returned to Japan feeling that he must assist Japan in catching up to the Western world. Sidney Devere Brown notes that he was "on fire with enthusiasm for reform."<sup>89</sup> Okubo was most impressed by England. He was able to juxtapose the small island nation side by side with his native Japan and see the possibilities of industrial and military strength along with the transportation system of roads, canals and railroad that made it all possible. There is no account of the American portion of his visit, which Brown attributes to a fire possibly destroying his journal, but it would have been much easier to envision Japan equaling the development of a similarly sized country over one of the vast expanse and resources of America.

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<sup>89</sup> Sidney Devere Brown, "Okubo Toshimichi: His Political and Economic Policies in Early Meiji Japan," The Journal of Asian Studies 21 (Feb. 1962): 189-190.

## **Conclusion**

The 1860 mission to America was constrained due to the narrow scope of its authority. The lack of English interpreters made the process of communication very difficult, as Dutch was the common language, but native to neither country. Limited experience in any type of political diplomacy by its members also restricted the mission's ability to interact without committing Japan to increased relations with the Western nations at a time when Japan's leaders desired to remain in control of information from the West.

The makeup of the mission itself and the itinerary set up for the delegates demonstrated that the warrior government desired little more than a loyal group to convey a treaty to America for ratification. Other than the three primary envoys, the artists and two doctors, the remainder of the seventy-seven-man legation seemed to be there for ceremonial representation and, much like Fukuzawa, were accepted for the embassy if they simply had any desire to travel abroad. Their itinerary included the initial point of debarkation, San Francisco, followed by Washington D.C. to ratify the treaty, then Philadelphia to establish a currency exchange rate, and New York. The envoys requested that on the return voyage, port visits be kept to an absolute minimum so they might return home as soon as possible.

Contrasting the organization of the Iwakura Mission to its 1860 predecessor, if treaty revision had been the primary intent, the size of the mission could have been smaller and not so varied – a two or three person group versed in diplomacy and foreign affairs would have been sufficient. Instead, some of the most prominent leaders of the new government were dispatched to gain enlightenment and demonstrate the quality of the Restoration government to the rest of the world.<sup>90</sup> Leaders from the various ministries in the Meiji government also went to view corresponding government institutions in the Western countries. Representatives from the military, judges, and members from the imperial court accompanied the group. The last essential group was the Japanese foreign language students who were sent to provide expertise about each country, as well as translation support. The Iwakura mission traveled overland, inspecting all types of social institutions and commercial and industrial centers. As Kido indicated so often in his journal entries, there was much discussion and debate, as well as reflection on what was good in the systems they were viewing. They were intent on meeting the challenge to take back to Japan the best of Western culture that Japan could adopt in her own industrial revolution.

There was evidence from both missions that individuals learned from their experiences abroad. Fukuzawa returned to Japan with a *Webster's Dictionary* and

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<sup>90</sup> Nish, 1-2, 11-12.

continued his studies in English and eventually produced an English-Japanese dictionary. Beginning in 1866 he published a series of essays entitled *Conditions in the West* that described Western civilization in terms the average Japanese could understand. But it was not until after the 1868 Restoration that he openly advocated Western style reform.<sup>91</sup> The overwhelming anti-Western sentiment of the early 1860s precluded Fukuzawa from espousing a pro-Western viewpoint upon his return to Japan. During the struggle that resulted in ousting the Tokugawa government, Fukuzawa feared for his life to the point that from 1862 to 1872, he would not venture out after dark, to avoid a possible assassination attempt by anti-Western extremists.<sup>92</sup> The fact that he waited until after the Restoration strengthens my argument that it was differences in government and social climates that brought about the different outlooks of the 1860 and Iwakura missions.

Unlike Fukuzawa, who had to wait for the political situation to change in order to espouse his views, Okubo returned to Japan in 1873 and immediately began to instigate change within the government. Okubo was from the same Satsuma clan as was Saigo Takamori, who had remained in Japan during the Iwakura mission as one of the leading government figures. Saigo advocated Japan's immediate expansion into Korea, which was popular amongst the now

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<sup>91</sup> Pyle, 80-84.

<sup>92</sup> Hirakawa, 61.

unemployed former samurai, particularly in Satsuma. Through his recent encounters, Okubo understood Japan's relative position among the world powers and that war would slow Japan's modernizing process. Okubo thus sided against Saigo on the Korea issue.<sup>93</sup> This action was very unpopular in his native domain, but solidified Okubo's position among the Meiji leadership and he emerged as a leader who rallied foreign-trained men as "initiators of new programs...who saw them to completion."<sup>94</sup>

Similar events from the mission of 1860 and the Iwakura Mission contrasts how the principal envoys of each mission conducted their observations, while also reflecting the prevailing policy of Japan's government at the time of the respective missions. In Philadelphia on June 14, 1860, some members of the delegation were able to view a hot air balloon's ascension en route to New York. Yanagawa described the construction of the balloon and its potential flight times in great detail. However, he did not take the opportunity to ride in the balloon and concluded with the remark that "although man is skillful enough to make a balloon which can go so fast, yet it is not often used."<sup>95</sup> Kido had a similar opportunity to view a balloon while in Boston in 1872. He recorded that "we went to board it, then ascended a thousand feet into the air. This must be the first

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<sup>93</sup> Nish, 190-191.

<sup>94</sup> Brown, 191.

<sup>95</sup> Yanagawa, 70-71.



time that a Japanese has gone up in a balloon."<sup>96</sup> There were other factors that prohibited the members of the first mission to America from taking a balloon ride, but the concept of staying grounded or keeping focused on the primary mission was the central theme in their instructions from the Emperor. The three primary envoys ensured their own conduct and that of the rest of the mission members did not diverge from the assigned tasks of treaty ratification and observing conditions in America, as any deviation would have been viewed unfavorable by the Tokugawa bakufu.

The Iwakura Mission was not only dispatched by the Meiji government but was also composed of many important individuals who held key positions in the new order. Their instructions were to demonstrate legitimate leadership and observe the institutions that would benefit and could be adopted by Japan. In essence, much like Kido's ride in the balloon, they were to overcome obstacles to Japan's progress and return with the concepts and knowledge to help her sail speedily up to the level of the Western powers.

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<sup>96</sup> Kido, 178.

## Appendix A

The “Letter of Instructions” to the envoys of the 1860 mission translated into English by the Shogunate translators:

You are ordered to proceed to Washington to exchange the ratification of the Treaty and to be careful about all business matters of importance so that the peace and friendship between both countries be permanent.

If the officers and attendants accompanying you should behave improperly either on board or on shore, they will be punished. You will therefore take care that such do not take place.

Should there be any shipwrecked Japanese desirous to return to their Country, you will see them back after communicating with the Secretary of State of the United States.

The 16<sup>th</sup> day of the first month

Of the seventh year of Ansei

Majesty’s Seal

To Simmi Buzen no Kami

Muragaki Adwadgi no Kami

Ogure Bungo no Kami

## Appendix B

The full address by the Emperor Mutsuhito to the members of the 1872 Iwakura Mission:

After careful study and observation, I am deeply impressed with the belief that the most powerful and enlightened nations of the world are those who have made diligent effort to cultivate their minds, and sought to develop their country in the fullest and most perfect manner.

Thus convinced, it becomes my responsible duty, as a Sovereign, to lead our people wisely, in a way to attain for them results equally beneficial; and their duty is to assist diligently and unitedly in all efforts to attain these ends. How, otherwise, can Japan advance and sustain herself upon an independent footing among the nations of the world?

From you, nobles of this realm, whose dignified position is honored and conspicuous in the eyes of the people at large, I ask and expect conduct well becoming your exalted position – ever calculated to endorse, by your personal example, those goodly precepts to be employed hereafter in elevating the masses of our people.

I have to-day assembled your honorable body in our presence-chamber that I might first express to you my intentions, and, in foreshadowing my policy, also impress you all with the fact that both this Government and people will expect from you diligence and wisdom, while

leading and encouraging those in your several districts, to move forward in paths of progress. Remember, your responsibility to your country is both great and important. Whatever our natural capacity for intellectual development, diligent effort and cultivation is required to attain successful results.

If we would profit by the useful arts and sciences and conditions of society prevailing among more enlightened nations, we must either study these at home as best we can, or send abroad an expedition of practical observers, to foreign lands, competent to acquire for us those things our people lack, which are best calculated to benefit this nation.

Travel in foreign countries, properly indulged in, will increase your store of useful knowledge; and although some of you may be advanced in age, unfitted for the vigorous study of new ways, all may bring back to our people much valuable information. Great national defects require immediate remedies.

We lack superior institutions for high female culture. Our women should not be ignorant of those great principals on which the happiness of daily life frequently depends. How important the education of mothers, on whom future generations almost wholly rely for the early cultivation of those intellectual tastes which an enlightened system of training is designed to develop!

Liberty is therefore granted wives and sisters to accompany their relatives on foreign tours, that they may acquaint themselves with better forms of female education, and, on their return, introduce beneficial improvements in the training of our children.

With diligent and united efforts, manifested by all classes and conditions of people throughout the empire, we may attain successively the highest degrees of civilization within our reach, and shall experience no serious difficulty in maintaining power, independence, and respect among nations.

To you, nobles, I look for the endorsement of these views; fulfill my best expectations by carrying out these suggestions, and you will perform faithfully your individual duties to the satisfaction of the people of Japan.

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## **Vita**

Kevin Ray Bishop was born in Provo, Utah on February 20, 1960, the son of James Lee Bishop and Noreen Bishop. After completing his work at Moapa Valley High School, Overton, Nevada in 1978, he entered Ricks Junior College in Rexburg, Idaho. He completed an Associate degree at Ricks in 1982 after serving a two-year mission in Japan for *The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*. He enrolled at Utah State University, Logan, Utah and completed a Bachelor of Science degree in 1985. Kevin entered active military service in 1985. He is a graduate of the United States Army Rotary Wing Flight, Airborne, Air Assault, and Command and General Staff Officer Schools. He has served in a variety of positions throughout the United States and Japan. He is currently a Lieutenant Colonel and entered The Graduate School at the University of Texas in September 2000, to complete his training as a Japan Foreign Area Officer. He married Colleen Warrick in 1983 and they are the parents of seven children.

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This report was typed by the author.